

REMARKS

Claims 2-7, 9-11, 13-20, 22-24, 26-31, 33-35, 37-44, 46-48, 50-55, 57-59, 61-68, and 70-73 are pending in the present application after this amendment cancels claims 1, 25, and 49.

Claims 2, 26, and 50 have been amended to include the features of their respective base claims.

Claims 9, 11, 14, 22-24, 33, 35, 38, 44, 46-48, 57-59, 62, 68, and 70-73 have been amended to change their dependency relationships. No new matter has been added by the amendments, which find support throughout the specification and figures. In view of the amendments and the following remarks, favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

Applicants note with appreciation that the Examiner acknowledges that claims 3-7, 11, 13-19, 20, 27-31, 35, 37-43, 51-55, 59, and 61-67 are directed to patentable subject matter.

Claims 1, 9, 10, 22-25, 33, 34, 46-49, 57, 58 and 70-72 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being disclosed by United States Patent No.: 5,142,617 to Dalrymple et al. (hereinafter referred to as Dalrymple). Claims 44 and 68 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dalrymple as applied to claims 1, 25 and 49 above, and further in view of United States Patent No. 6,108,011 to Fowler (hereinafter referred as Fowler).

Claims 1, 25, and 49 have been canceled thereby obviating the rejection of these claims.

Claims 9, 22-24, 33, 46-48, 57, 58, and 70-72 have been amended so that claims 9, 10, 22-24, 33, 34, 46-48, 57, 58 and 70-72 ultimately depend from claims 2, 26, and 50, and are therefore discussed below in regard to the rejection of claims 2, 26, and 50.

Claims 2, 26 and 50 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of double patenting over claims 1, 7 and 13, respectively, of U.S. Patent No. 6,373,491 to Sasaki.